LUNCH IN THE FIELDS.

Blue sky and sunshine and noontide,
And rest from the reaping;
And all in the wheat ears the south wind
Its fragrances sweeping.

White is the bread that the master
Shall have for the taking;
Coarse is the loaf that their hunger
Finds sweet in the breaking.

Golden the wine and the flagon
His red wine is spilling;
Rude is the cup for their drinking,
The flask for their filling.

His is the cool and the shadow,
The gold and the guerdon;
Theirs is the fierce dew of labor,
The heat and the burden.

Yet while the great sky gives blessing,
The wide summer weather,
No odds of fate are they asking—
They are together!
—Harriet P. Spofford in Harper's Bazar.

HIS FIRST'S ASHES.

When the wife of Durande, captain in the One Hundred and Twelfth cuirassiers of the line, died, he was sorely stricken with sorrow, and would not be comforted. In fact, he had hardly had time to enjoy his happiness or appreciate his treasure, for they had been married only a month, when she was taken from him in the midst of their wedding tour in Italy.

Just about returning to Paris, she fell ill in Rome and died of fever, in spite of the many physicians called to attend her and the devoted care of her husband, who never left her side till she breathed her last.

Conscious to the end, she bravely sought to console him.

"It was not given to mortals," she said, "to be happy for long. Our joy has been too great; it could not last. Do not weep, dearest," she cried; "let me pass away in peace, without the memory of your distressed face. Smile; do not look so sad!" and she raised her trembling hand and caressingly laid it on his cheek.

"You are a soldier," pursued she; "death should have no terrors for you. I have loved you only; do me, then, one last little favor. I wish to be near you always, even in death. I beseech you, cremate me, then; reduce me to a little heap of ashes that you can carry always with you. I shall never disturb you. How strange it seems to call a heap of ashes 'I'—yet so it will be. You will sometimes glance at me thus, and can never entirely forget me!"

Nevertheless when Durande returned to Paris he was a changed man. He was thin and haggard; his eyes had lost their luster, his step its elastic spring and confidence.

"Courage, courage, my boy!" his colonel would say to him.

"Be brave, my friend!" repeated his brother officers.

But joy and brightness had gone out of Durande's life. The once brilliant soldier was a broken man.

No one on arrival was allowed to touch his luggage, and he himself, with care and weeping, drew from his satchel an artistic little vase that he solemnly charged his brosseur never on any account to lay hands upon.

"A token of poor madame?" the man ventured to ask.

"Yes, a token," Durande responded; before which, the slim Roman urn that held all that was left of his poor wife's remains, he knelt and wept bitterly when alone again. At night it stood in full view upon a cabinet beside his bed, that his eyes might rest upon it when not closed in sleep and by day. When his leave had expired and he had returned to duty, he was distrait, a stranger to his comrades, joining in none of their pleasures or amusements, seeming to live only in the memory of his lost wife and that urn—which might be knocked over.

He had placed her portrait in every room in his house, and by a strange paradox of sentiment it was here, among all these tender recollections, that he passed his least miserable hours.

By degrees, through steady contemplation, perhaps, the sight of the Roman urn produced a less painful effect upon the disconsolate widower, and no longer caused him the cruel heart pangs of the first days of bereavement.

He was now able to picture his darling as she had been in the zenith of strength and beauty, gay, smiling, charming. Again and again he recalled and lived over the moments of that honeymoon journey, and grew happy himself in this sweet, posthumous revival of radiant hours.

When at work the urn stood on his writing table, and he thought how in life and in that bygone time he had written and pondered and she had sat quietly beside him reading or sewing tranquilly, silently, without disturbing him.

Six months passed, lengthened to a year, and now and then it happened that Durande forgot the urn and left it on his table at night instead of carrying it to his bedroom. Finally he enshrined it for good on his office table. Not that the memory of his wife was less than at first, but because in time it was borne in upon him that a funereal deposit like this was unsanitary, unhealthy in a sleeping room.

Nevertheless every day it was surrounded, as usual, with lilies and roses, his wife's favorite flowers.

The one year lengthened to two, and Durande had returned to his bachelor life.

"'Tis wrong to bury yourself alive thus," said his friends and his wife's relations; "begin, go into the world again."

Durande yielded, once more went out, frequented the quarters of his brother officers, joined in their jollifying, and actually one evening carried them all home with him to a banquet in his own apartments. The wine was good, the champagne sparkling, laughter, songs, uproar the order of the night; when the supper ended they all adjourned to the private office, where the mortuary shrine stood alone upon the table, severe and mournful.

Revelry ran riot, in the midst of which Durande suddenly recalled the "presence of the dead," as he was wont to call the urn, caught it up hurriedly,

Why the North Sea Is Green.

The green color of ocean water in high northern latitudes depends upon the number of medusæ and other minute animal forms which inhabit it. The deep green northern seas literally swarm with these miniature creatures, in some places as many as 128 of them having been found in a single cubic inch of water. In this proportion a cubic foot would contain 221,184; a cubic fathom, 47,775,744, and a cubic mile, 47,776,000,000,000. From soundings made in the vicinity where these creatures are found in such immense numbers it is probable that the water will average a mile in depth.

Whether these forms occupy the whole depth or not is uncertain. But whether they do or not gives us a stupendous idea of the immensity of creation, for, if the number of these little living things in the space of one single mile be so great, what an infinite number must be required to give color to the hundreds of thousands of cubic miles contained in the oceans of the globe!—Philadelphia Press.

Trifling with Sacred Things.

I once frightened 200 colored people almost to death. They were holding a protracted meeting in a little tumble down church near Nashville and the excitement ran high. I attended with some other bad boys, misbehaved and was fired out. I determined to break up the meeting. I procured some phosphorus, and the next night before the crowd assembled drew skeletons, death's heads and devils all over the walls. I then concealed myself in the loft, armed with a long hollow reed; while my companions, provided with sheets and masks, hid themselves in the grove in which the church was situated. That night the church was packed and religious fervor reached its climax. The preacher was picturing the horrors of hell and the wickedness of its master and the sinners were shivering with apprehension. Two large lamps hung in the center of the low room furnished the light, and by the help of the hollow reed I blew them both out.

The preacher stopped in the middle of his exhortation. The walls blazed forth with horrors traced in burning, snaky outlines. There was a convulsive gasp, a scream from 200 throats and a stampede. The preacher went through a window, and, though a rheumatic, outran all his parishioners. Then my ghostly confederates appeared, uttering dismal groans. Scores of the terrified blacks, unable to run, lay down and groaned with an agony of fear. The joke was too good to keep. My father heard of it. He was a Presbyterian divine and did not believe in trifling with sacred things. It is said that he laughs best who laughs last, and the colored people came in on the subsequent cachination.—Interview in St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Coal Worth More Than Clothes.

Apropos of the way the coal barons are grinding profits out of the consumers and propose still further to continue the grinding process, a little conversation was heard last week at the Pennsylvania railroad station in Jersey City that was very pat. A young New York business man was at the station, waiting to meet his mother, who lives with him here, but had been down in Pennsylvania in one of the small towns of the coal regions visiting relatives. The mother arrived, and after the usual osculatory greetings the son bethought himself of her baggage. She went to the baggage room with him and pointed out a very small trunk.

"I brought all the clothes I took away with me back in that," she said.

"Brought back your clothes from Pennsylvania!" exclaimed the young man in tones of mock surprise and distress. "Brought clothes from Pennsylvania to New York! Why, in the name of all that is sensible, mother dear, did you not throw away your clothes and bring your trunk back full of coal!"—New York Times.

A Bad Break.

A doctor, who was treating one of his patients for a simple but tedious disorder, found the man in such an irritable condition that he began to cheer him up. But his words fell on deaf ears, for the man had been housed up so long that he was firmly convinced that his time had come.

"Tut, tut," said the doctor. "I'll have you round again in a few days if you'll keep quiet and take the medicine. Why, man, I suffer from the same complaint as you myself."

There was a look of compassion in the patient's eyes as he reached out the bottle and said:

"In that case, doctor, do take some of this medicine you prescribed for me."

The man had grown almost hopeful under the influence of the doctor's reassuring words, but his hopes were cruelly dashed the next moment as the medical man drew back from the bottle with a shudder and replied, "No, thanks."—New York Evening Sun.

Somebody Was Looking.

M. Sala tells the following: "I was present at the Jubilee garden party given by her majesty at Buckingham palace. My flower dropped out of my buttonhole. A very pretty young servant—presumably there for the purpose of looking after our wearing apparel, sticks and umbrellas—picked it up. While in the act of putting it in my coat again, with a view of obtaining a peep into the queen's rooms, I asked her if there was a chance of seeing them, at the same time endeavoring to slip a sovereign into her hand. She shrunk back. 'I wish I could, sir,' she whispered, 'but there's a heye on me!'"—Pall Mall Gazette.

The Mischief That Rumor Does.

"The manner in which reports about anything become exaggerated as they travel from mouth to mouth on the shoulders of babbling rumor was conspicuously exemplified in my town ten years ago," said O. J. Elgin, of Akron, O. "About 9 o'clock one morning a runaway horse dashed through the plate glass window of one of the biggest banks in the city. The incident, of course, caused considerable excitement for a moment, and as the news of it spread through town some nervous and excitable individual connected the words 'run' and 'bank' in an ominous way. This idiot soon was convinced that there was a run on the bank, and he so told all the shop people in his neighborhood. That was enough. Nothing more was needed. By 12 o'clock that day there were hundreds of money mad and frenzied men and women around that bank scrambling to withdraw their deposits.

"The broken plate glass window only served to increase their excitement, and all attempts by the bank officials to explain the situation were howled down. By the closing hour in the afternoon thousands of dollars had been drained from the vaults of the bank, and but for other banks coming to the assistance of the unfortunate institution that night by distributing circulars around the city telling depositors that they (the other banks) would cash all checks properly certified on the bank with the broken plate glass window the run would have continued the next day and resulted in 'busting' the bank, for there is no institution that can withstand a run without warning."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Leading Him On.

A clever ruse was that adopted by counsel, who afterward attained to distinction, who had to examine a witness in a disputed will case. One of the witnesses to the will was the deceased man's valet, who swore that after signing his name at the bidding of his master he then, also acting under instructions, carefully sealed the document by means of the taper by the bedside.

The witness was induced to describe every minute detail of the whole process, the exact time, the position of the taper, the size and quality of the sealing wax, "which," said the counsel, glancing at the document in his hand, "was of the ordinary red description?"

"Red sealing wax, certainly," answered the witness.

"My lord," said the counsel, handing the paper to the judge, "you will please observe that it was fastened with a wafer."—London Tit-Bit